

TDR/LAND PRESERVATION WORK GROUP

Exploring ways to efficiently preserve more land in Maryland

Report to Chair – April 8, 2010

Introduction

By submitting Part II of its final report, the TDR/Land Preservation Workgroup of the Task Force on the Future for Growth and Development in Maryland completes its charge from the Task Force.

Part I was a stand-alone report dealing specifically with Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs and their feasibility in Maryland. Interjurisdictional programs were a particular focus. In addition to providing recommendations for the Task Force, it can serve as a one-stop shop that local governments can use for information on TDR program components, the benefits and obstacles associated with TDR programs, and examples of how communities around the country use them. Part II contains other options for preserving land beyond just TDRs. The options fall into four categories.

Strengthen, or make more efficient, existing conservation programs:

- Look at existing uses of transfer tax to ensure that each program is working as effectively and efficiently as possible.
- Ensure all programs are targeting land purchases to maximize their investments.
- Stretch preservation dollars in MALPF and Rural Legacy by reducing or limiting the percentage of unrestricted fair market value that can be paid for an easement.

Identify new funding sources:

- Explore opportunities for creating and selling new types of easements.
- Increase State funding for land preservation.
- Look into federal programs that could provide money for land conservation in Maryland.

Things that can be done through zoning or regulations:

- Explore ways for State infrastructure funding to be steered to Transfer of Development Rights receiving zones as an incentive for their creation.
- Counties can use their authority to target their preservation efforts to create a preservation/ transitional buffer around receiving zones.
- Explore protective rural zoning to leverage state investment with sound growth regulations.

Education Awareness:

- Increase outreach to landowners.
- Increase outreach to the general public on the value of conservation programs.